

THE NURSE'S STORY



BY
ADELE
BENEAU

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PROLOGUE.

"I got my copy in the hospitals and camps of France and England," says Adele Benneau (Mrs. Walter Horton Schoellkopf of Buffalo), the author of "The Nurse's Story." In the relation of a delightful romance there are introduced thrilling incidents of the great war in Europe. It is plain that the author has been on the battlefield, right close to the firing line.

She started for Europe at the outbreak of hostilities. After telling of the rush of soldiers from England and France she grips the reader with her intimacy of the conditions as they exist in the great European conflagration.

Her descriptions of the field hospitals, of the wounded soldiers of the different warring countries as they are brought in, of exciting motor rides from one battlefield to another, all go to hold the interest throughout. The author had influential friends in the armies abroad who helped her gather the material for her story.

It is no exaggeration to state that no novel of the war yet written gives a better idea of actual conditions at the front than "The Nurse's Story."

CHAPTER I. Come at Once.

ONE May evening after sunset father, mademoiselle and I were having supper out of doors under a great magnolia tree when a motorcar came racing up the drive. Major Howell, our neighbor, who owned one of the most beautiful places in Louisiana, drove the car himself and was obviously much excited. He explained immediately that a party of guests from the north was staying with him, and among them was a celebrated surgeon, who had suddenly been taken ill. By rare good fortune father was at home, so that a moment later the two men disappeared down the drive. It is strange how, for no apparent reason, certain scenes remain vividly in the memory, and I distinctly recall the feeling of expectancy with which I watched my father's departure.

Twenty minutes later, for the place was only a mile away, the car came dashing back, and the driver handed me a hastily scrawled note from father asking me to bring his operating case and come immediately. Without losing a moment and hastily gathering up the instruments, I was off. As we sped up the drive father came running down the broad stone steps to meet me. Taking both my hands in his, he said gravely:

"Adele, my patient, Dr. Curtis, is a very distinguished surgeon. His loss would be a great one to humanity. He has an attack of acute appendicitis and must be operated on at once. Do you feel equal to helping me?"

Perhaps I felt father's reputation was at stake; perhaps there was no time for an attack of nerves. In any event I said to him in a tone which must have carried conviction:

"Don't be afraid, father, I'll try not to fail you."

As we entered Dr. Curtis' room a moment later he called out, "Doctor, it has just occurred to me that you must have at your house an operating room."

"I have, of course," father interrupted, divining his thoughts, "but Dr. Curtis, you know as well as I how dangerous it is to move a patient under such circumstances."

"Oh, yes, I know all about that," he broke in, with an attempt at a laugh. "But I am the patient in this case, and I prefer to take my chances in an antiseptic operating room, even though I have to be shaken up a bit to get there."

Seeing no approving response in father's face, Dr. Curtis went on with the rare smile which many people say is half his success. "Unless you mind the nuisance of an improprietous guest for the next week or two, I insist on going to your house."

Time was too valuable to waste in an argument, and Dr. Curtis was soon ready for the very short journey to La Bas. In exactly forty-five minutes from the time Major Howell first came up the drive, Dr. Curtis was on the operating table. At his own request father gave him the new method of anesthesia—scopolamine.

The operation was a simple one, with only slight adhesions and no complications and was, as such things go, speedily over.

The next day two nurses came up from New Orleans. Except for changing the dressings and a perfunctory taking of temperature there was very little for them to do.

At Dr. Curtis' request I passed many hours of the day in his room. He seemed



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his entire family, who were the staunchest of royalists. By way of explanation and to give it circulation, his mother told her dearest friend, in confidence, of course, that the wiles and smiles of a woman were the cause of his disloyalty.

"The woman" was one of the lovely ladies in waiting of the thrice lovely Empress Eugenie herself, and for her the young officer sacrificed family, position and friends. He fought brilliantly on many fields and received due honor and promotion, but when the war was over and the emperors' cause lost he found himself with little else than the devotion of the woman for whom he had sacrificed so much.

But he always felt this devotion ample reward, and well he might, she mused, "considering the happiness of their after lives. They were married at once, and he took up with characteristic energy the study of medicine at L'Ecole de Medecine, in Paris. His family, refusing to be reconciled to his marriage, led them to come to Louisiana. The young wife had brought him an unusually large dot for those days, and, as they both loved the country, it came about that they bought this plantation.

"The young people were happy here, but not even their absorbing affection could entirely safeguard their paradise from sorrow, for their first two children died soon after birth, and when a third was expected our Dr. Benneau's father, whether from sentiment or a superstitious dread of a third loss, determined that the next child should be born at home, for France to them was still home."

"It was there, in the Yonne district, that their son was born. A year later we came back to Louisiana. When the boy was old enough for school he was sent to France, where he proved

himself not only a brilliant pupil, but the possessor of many innate noble qualities. His father had elaborate plans for his future, but at twenty-two, a few days after finishing his studies, the boy startled his family by marrying a beautiful Creole, the daughter of a well known French banker of New Orleans. They had met on a steamer when he was returning from France on his last vacation, and she, being young and romantic, and he young and ardent, they eloped a few days after his graduation and were married by special license in London. They had known there would be great obstacles to their marriage, for her family were of Huguenot stock, and his devout Roman Catholics. And indeed neither her father nor any of her people ever forgave her.

"The young people came home to Louisiana, where they were welcomed by his family with the warmest affection. But the father, with new world ideas, insisted that his son take up some profession, and after long consideration the young man decided to pursue in his turn the profession of medicine.

"To this end the young couple returned to Paris. A year later in an apartment overlooking the park in the Boulevard St. Germain Adele was born. But in giving Adele life the young mother paid for it with her own. Here mademoiselle hurried on, and I knew the tears were very near.

"It is the regret of my life and Adele's that she never knew her beautiful mother, but in looking at Adele I am often struck, the resemblance so strong. She has the same limpid brown eyes, and masses of waving coppery hair and the peculiar jasmine-like whiteness of skin, but her mouth is more sensitive, pr—mademoiselle stopped short and looked at Miss Curtis in a peculiar way for an instant.

Miss Curtis, looking at her head, after a moment, said meaningly: "I quite understand, my dear. Go on."

"Dr. Benneau was beside himself with grief at his young wife's death. She was the absorbing passion of his life, and I believe she is as much a real presence to him today as she was on the day she died so many years ago. In these circumstances he was, of course, unable to settle down to the monotonous life here and cleverly realized that his only salvation lay in work. Even several years later, when his course was finished, he was still in no condition mentally or physically to take up the grind here, and when he was urged by a former schoolmate to join an exploring expedition in Africa for the French government he did so, and continued that kind of work for many years.

"However, unless he were in the wilds of Tibet or on the heights of the Andes, Christmas time always found him with us. Both his parents were secretly very proud of their brilliant, daring son. Adele had always worshiped him. Life for her between his visits was a gray expanse of waiting.

"Two years ago the health of Adele's grandfather began to fail, and, realizing his approaching end, he sent for his son. He came at once. Dr. Benneau had been planning a trip to India and into Afghanistan with the Duke of—, but he immediately canceled all his arrangements and devoted himself to making the last days of his father as peaceful as possible. After a pause she added: "And that is how Dr. Benneau came to live with us. Since then he has carried on, with Adele's constant assistance, the large charity work among the blacks for which his father had been so beloved.

"It was natural in our seclusion that our lives should center around the work done by the men of the house. During the years when other girls learned golf, tennis, dancing and such things Adele has been measuring out medicines, taking temperatures and acting generally as office nurse to her grandfather and later to her father.

"I can well understand your surprise at finding here in the lonely woods of Louisiana a man of such wide culture and varied experience as Dr. Benneau. There was a little silence, and then mademoiselle smiled sadly and said, with a sigh, "That is my history."

Without a word Miss Curtis came over and kissed me, and as she did so I felt two hot tears on my cheek.

One day, nearly three weeks after the operation, I was delighted to find Dr. Curtis in the drawing room. He slowly rose as I came in and, feeling my look of astonishment, said laughingly:

"As a matter of fact, my dear, I might have been down a day or two earlier, only I didn't half try. I was having an ideal rest, lying there in your pretty, fresh-chintzed room, looking out on the broad Mississippi and thoroughly enjoying the company of yourself and your father—you especially, Benneau, and he turned to father, laughing, "you who have lived more stories than most people could invent."

A few days later, as I put my hand out to open the door of father's office, I heard my name and, without thinking, paused to listen. Dr. Curtis was speaking:

"Benneau, old man, whether you realize it or not, you are decidedly selfish to keep that charming girl buried alive here." He paused, and then, as father did not answer, went on: "I don't believe you appreciate what a jewel the girl is. In my whole experience, which is a pretty wide one, I have never known a girl with more real culture than Adele, and physically—why, man alive, she's a beauty!"

At this I suddenly became conscious of the fact that I was listening to a conversation not intended for my ears. With the blood burning my cheeks I turned away for a moment or two to regain my self possession, then I knocked and entered. Father came in and we went on as if nothing had happened.

He looked down into my eyes for a moment before he spoke: "Adele, dear, Dr. Curtis has been telling me that I am a selfish brute to keep you buried alive in this out of the way place and has asked me to let you go north with them for a visit."

"But, father!" I interrupted. (To Be Continued.)

More than 200 men, many of them officers, were ordered from the forts about New York harbor to El Paso.

Sir Thomas Lipton in a letter to Essex Yacht club says he hopes to compete next year for the America's cup.

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FAIRFIELD COUNTY NEWS

Want \$4.32 a Day
Plumbers of Norwalk have served demands for an increase in wages amounting to 50 cents a day and effective June 1. The likelihood is that the plumbers will receive the increase. The plumbers received an increase in June, 1914, and their present rate of pay is \$4.32 a day. The new rate will be \$4.32. This is with the provision of time a half for overtime and double time for Sundays and holidays.

Stalled by Snow
The drive on the outlying roads of the town made it impossible for the R. F. D. carriers leaving Bethel to cover their routes entirely. Friday, on route 24 the carrier was unable to carry any part, on route 1-2 only the west side of the road was covered and on 25 a small section only was covered.

Due to Electricity
John Mansfield, 35 years old, single, of Shelton, did not die of natural causes in the factory of the Blumenthal company. Shelton, as reported after he fell dead to the factory floor, but he was electrocuted by 196 volts of electricity that entered his body through the forefinger of his right hand. Coroner Phelan finds that 196 volts of electricity, one-third of the voltage considered by scientists as necessary to prove fatal to a man in normal health, caused Mansfield's death. This is said to be the lowest voltage known to cause electrocution.

In Stamford about a year ago, 310 volts caused the death of a man. It is inferred that Mansfield may have been in poor physical condition. He weighed two hundred pounds. Mansfield was working as a steamfitter's helper at the time of his death. He was holding a portable electric lamp in his hand, that was to be lighted to throw light under heating tanks. Mansfield's boss was about seventy-five feet away. He turned on the electricity. Mansfield dropped to the floor dead, the moment the electricity had been turned on. Coroner Phelan's investigation brought out the fact that the bulb did not fit tightly into the socket. There was space between the bulb and the socket, and the holder. Into this crevice Mansfield's forefinger slipped and he was electrocuted. The primary current was 240 volts, Coroner Phelan said. The voltage was distributed among lights so that there were exactly 196 volts in the lamp that Mansfield held.

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DISTRICT OF BRIDGEPORT, ss., PROBATE COURT.

March 13, 1916.
Estate of Mary Farrell, late of the town of Bridgeport in said district, deceased.
The Court of Probate for the District of Bridgeport, hath limited and allowed six months from the date hereof for Creditors of said Estate to exhibit their claims for settlement. Those who neglect to present their accounts, properly attested, within said time, will be barred a recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make immediate payment to

V. HALL ROOT, Administrator.
34 Sanford Building. S 14 s*

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DISTRICT OF BRIDGEPORT, ss., PROBATE COURT.

March 14, A. D. 1916.
Estate of Charles S. Carlson, late of Monroe in said district, deceased.
Upon application praying—that administration be granted on said estate represented intestate—as per said application on file more fully appears, it is

Ordered, that said application be heard and determined at the Probate Office in Bridgeport in said district, on the 23rd day of March, A. D. 1916, at 11:30 o'clock in the forenoon; and that notice thereof be given to all persons known to be interested in said estate to appear, if they see cause, at said time and place, and be heard thereon,—by publishing three times in some newspaper having a circulation in said district—a copy of this order, all at least 5 days before said day of hearing, and that return of notice given be made to this court.

Attest, PAUL L. MILLER, Judge.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DISTRICT OF BRIDGEPORT, ss., PROBATE COURT.

Estate of Mary Farrell, late of Bridgeport in said district, deceased.
The administrator having made application for an order authorizing him to sell certain real estate belonging to said estate, as per said application on file duly appears.

Ordered, that the said application be heard and determined at the Probate Office at Bridgeport, on the 16th day of March, 1916, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and this court directs said administrator to give notice to all persons interested in said estate to appear, if they see cause, and be heard thereon, by publishing this order once in a newspaper having a circulation in said district, on or before the 15th day of March, A. D. 1916, and return make to the court of notice given.

Attest, PAUL L. MILLER, Judge.

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